10/18/71

Dear Js,

If it is not being serialized out there, I've read the first two instalments of Vantage Point as they appeared in the Post. There's one thing that must be said for LBJ: he lies with his bare face hanging out. And smiling. I doubt he ever read Orwell, but he doesn't have to. He was rewriting history as it happened, so all he has to do now is rewrite his rewrite.

I intend nothing uncouth, but there was an appropriatenessness in the conditions under which I read it. Tomorrow I have the last of my annual checkup, a proctoscopic examination. Preparation consists of semi-fasting and a series of enemas. Nothing more suited than the first part!

Something just reminded me: you'll see it in the Times. There was a bit on the radio news this a.m. I heard it while walking. The Times apparently said he had access to and used some of the Pentagon Papers sealed by the court for "national security". If this is the case and you still have it, I'd like a copy of that for a special file of such items I have set aside for use in suits. I do plan more of them when I've time.

There is no hurry on this, but have you any recollectionof Gene Roberts' reporting from Dallas, before he went to the Times? A young friend has been in touch with him and he was promised to try and locate his original notes. He was not unfriendly to the critics in their conversation (save Lane and Garrison, and he felt my friend out on Garrison), saying they had made criticisms that had to be made but the old stuff, the WC was sloppy but the Times could find no disproof. One of the better reasons was his assignment to the Archives, where he succeeded inavoiding all so carefully referenced in my work. I had a meeting with the crew on the second investigation, for which I believe I am largely responsible, at Salisbury's invitation. I was remarkably unimpressed. They all had clear and expressed preconceptions except for Pete Kihss. But if Roberts is expressing honestly a view he now holds, in time it could be good to know.

I xeroxed the ms of WWII for Salisbury. I believe they never returned it. Kihss said they couldn't even find what I cited.

The Artie Sahw in my letter to JER is the former band leader.

Best,